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REACTIONARY LETTERS.

No. VIII.

(Continued from page 114.)

AFTER hearing *Lohengrin*, Wagner's latest opera, we feel inclined to say: "Wagner is beautiful—as beautiful as a Madonna, only a weeping Madonna." The notes form a lake of tears, in which there are but very few currents that do not contain salt-water—far too few to quench the thirst of a healthy stomach. It is true that the work in question possesses a certain unity, and is more finished and perfect than Wagner's earlier compositions; but the unity consists of grief and groanings, and too much grief is—wearisome. A little is very agreeable, and, in fact, highly interesting; but the eyes must be allowed to smile again, and the tears must be kissed away. If they are continually trickling, they will tire out the most zealous admirer. We feel inclined to prophecy for this opera the fate of Spohr's *Jessonda*. *Jessonda* is respected, loved, and set up as a model in various ways; but people do not want to hear her *too frequently*—they are willing to hear her now and then, as a kind of Lenten fare, but she never took her place among stock operas. Spohr is one-sided, and, up to the present moment, Wagner is so, too; if, however, he succeeds in his newest work, *Die Nibelungen*, he will be so no longer, and we are very much mistaken if the music does not make its way, for the text contains a mass of the most varied sensations, including humour, in which eminent minds love to indulge.

For the study of genius there is only one book, and *that is Nature*. As long as a man draws upon his own resources—I mean as long he has to do with the insignificant inheritance that he calls *his heart, his soul*—he will be one-sided. It is not until he has used up the small capital given him as his own property; not until he has vigorously extended his two arms into the *world*, and made himself master of the ice-mountains and blooming meadows, the angry sea and the clear stream as smooth as a mirror, the majestic repose of the primitive forest, and the tender silence of a rose-arbour, with all its inhabitants, from the heaven-storming giants down to the pretty-teasing elves, and learnt how to govern the whole with a hand of iron—it is not until then that he will be capable of creating that towards which Time will stretch its destroying claws in vain.

Tannhäuser and *Lohengrin* are as yet little Wagner, delicately elegant, always wrist-banded and beloved, who will hear nothing about understanding in love, if the latter is only in other respects *piquant*—practically wonderful. In the *Nibelungen* he has entirely got rid of this carefully frizzled individual, and love seems overcome; at least the sorrowing-tearful kind of love. Dwarfs and gods joke with one another. That this will be a work for the sentimental manner of viewing things that certain critics patronize, I doubt, as well as that this or that individual would re-write his opera *à la Nibelungen*, in order to vault, all booted and spurred, upon the "more elevated point of view."

Wagner has found out the trace of the great secret, suspected only by a few, and discovered by still fewer, namely: To create works whose effect comes up to the expectations formed of them.—The most recent style of sentimentality, and, with it, chief-master Spohr, is forgotten—has become old, like the Vicar of Wakefield. However noble the train of sentiment of *Elise* and her knight, it contains far too insignificant an amount of world-

history to hold its ground. In order to move large masses, more strings must be struck, so that each individual may be touched in the feeling peculiar to himself. In opposition to this, many persons eagerly assert that in one work of art only one sensation, but in all its varieties of light and shade, must be given, and that even the programme of a concert should be marked by this unity of sentiment. They do not see or hear, although there lies before them a form which has been recognized for nearly a hundred years, and which has never been altered except with disadvantage—I mean the *Symphony*. If, in the programme of a concert, a light, gay piece follows a serious one, certain cracked-brain critics cry out: "What arrangement!"—yet they are contented with a *scherzo* after the dead march in Beethoven's *Eroica*—they are contented with the same thing in every symphony, in every quartet, in every sonata, whatever its character. After Beethoven, they are contented with Mozart, and after Mozart, with Haydn, and yet Beethoven is a colossal rock of granite, Mozart a smiling mead, and Haydn a good-natured ploughboy. They are contented with all this, not because their understanding reaches far enough to enable them to conceive the manifoldness of human nature, and the necessity for change of feeling, but because they do not dare to attack the combination of these masters, who are declared by the initiated to be classical. The form: *Allegro, Adagio, Scherzo, and Finale* contains a deep meaning, which Mozart turned to good account in his operas. After any excitement of the passions, like that produced by *Donna Anna*, in the soul of the hearer, repose is necessary, and we find it in the humorous *Don Juan*, who is superior to sentimental love; in the apparently thick-headed, but, in reality, exceedingly sharp *Leporello*; in the easy-going, good-natured *Masotto*; and in the amiable and coquettish *Zerlina*.

The opera would long since have disappeared from the repertory, if we had had only *Anna, Elvira, Ottavio*, and the old Commander. It cannot be denied that the *best and greatest* portion of the opera is what the characters just named have to sing, but monotony would long since have killed them. Meyerbeer, also, has discovered the great secret, and exerted his best energies to put it into practice. In the *Huguenots* and *Robert* there are a great many fine and successful parts, but they do not seem to be yet so intimately connected with his inward soul as is the case with Mozart, and we sometimes feel something which appears as if it ought not to be where it is, or as if it did not belong to the style; something, at least, so it strikes us, as if written merely out of a wish to oblige; something which seems to occupy the place it does only to afford some fair vocalist an opportunity of displaying her skill in this or that particular;—and we will confess, or Meyerbeer will, that this is the reason why not a few of his operas has been so often repeated.

This is especially evident in *Robert*, in the part of the Princess. In the *Huguenots* the humour is more intimately connected with the whole, the first act being particularly masterly in this respect. Meyerbeer has admirably dramatised his thoughts here. Like the French, he is of opinion that: "*Un choix de pensées ne peut être que du nectar ou de l'opium, ou l'un et l'autre.*"

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—It is believed that this establishment will open for the present season on the 10th of April. We do not, however, vouch for the correctness of this.

ORGAN.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE CHAPEL, OXFORD.

This organ, lately completed by Messrs. Gray and Davison, has been several times exhibited at their manufactory with perfect success. As it will very shortly be removed to its destined site in the Chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford, and is, in several respects, a remarkable instrument, something more than a mere record of its existence may, perhaps, be acceptable to our readers. To begin with, then, we subjoin a list of its registers:—

Four complete Manuals, from CC 8 feet to F in alt, the swell throughout,—the Pedal Organ, two octaves and a fourth, from CCC 16 feet to F. The following are the stops in the instrument:—

PEDAL ORGAN.	
Grand open Diapason.....	16-feet
Grand Bourdon	16-feet
Grand Octave	8-feet
Grand Trombone.....	16-feet
SOLO ORGAN.	
Flute Harmonique	8-feet
Tromba	8-feet
GRAND ORGAN.	
Open Diapason	8-feet
Open Diapason	8-feet
Stopped Diapason	8-feet
Octave	4-feet
Flute.....	4-feet
Twelfth.....	3-feet
Super Octave	2-feet
Sesquialtra	3-ranks
Mixture	2-ranks
Posaune	8-feet
CHOIR ORGAN.	
Salicional	8-feet
Gamba	8-feet
Stopped Diapason Bass	8-feet
Concert Flute	8-feet
Octave	4-feet
	Solo to Swell Manual.

A mere inspection of this scheme will convince any one acquainted with the subject that the Magdalen Organ, though by no means what, in these days, can be called a very large, is a singularly complete instrument. Indeed, it would be difficult to mention another organ of which the comparatively small contents are made to go so far, or in which, as limited a number of registers place, by judicious contrivance, an equal amount of effect in the hands of the solo-performer. The only serious omission—and a very strange one it is—seems to be the absence of any sixteen-feet register on the great-organ manual. As, in London, at least, the sixteen-feet stop has long been recognized an essential component of the character of tone required for a great-organ—at least, in instruments of any pretension to magnitude, we presume that in omitting it, in this case, the organ-builders simply followed their instructions. In some of the quiet spots in England, where learning and progress do not always mean the same thing, the organs of Father Smith and Greene still reign supreme as models of effect. What our forefathers did, that must their posterity do. There is a sort of pious horror of a "double diapason." We hear all sorts of things alleged against it. It is offensive to the ear, and it makes all manner of breaches in musical grammar, which are, doubtless, more distressingly felt at the seats of learning than elsewhere. Nevertheless—and ears and grammar and everything else to the contrary notwithstanding, (perhaps, our Continental neighbours may chance to be quite as sensitive on these points as any one else)—we caution the objectors that they will never make a fine great organ without this dreaded stop. We mention the omission merely on the score of effect. So far as power and magnitude are concerned, the instrument is abundantly enough for the building in which it is to be heard:—indeed, it is highly probable that, when placed *in situ*, a very judicious style of management may be expedient if its tones are to be kept on the agreeable side of sufficiency.

The first constructive peculiarity we notice about this instrument is the fourth manual, or "Solo Organ." It is placed above the swell manual, and commands a *Flute Harmonique* of eight feet, down to tenor C, and a *Tromba* of eight feet, extending throughout the compass of the key-board. The sound-boards of this manual are placed near the front, and at the top of the organ case. The pipes of the *Tromba*, completely in view, project horizontally over the cornice at the front and sides of the case, and above these again rise perpendicularly the tubes of the *Flute Harmonique*, yielding, in the catenarian curve formed by their extremities, an elegant finish to the contour of the design. Appearance, however, is by no means the chief object of this arrangement. Both these stops—and each appropriately in its kind—gain immensely in effect by the lofty and unscreened position assigned to them. The delicious qualities of the *Flute Harmonique* we have often referred to. Messrs. Gray and Davison were the first builders in England who attempted the making of this stop, and have yet remained by far the most successful: the present instance makes no exception to their claims in this respect. The *Tromba* is a powerful reed of the "Tuba" species, blown with six inches pressure of wind;—a limited force, certainly, for stops of this description, but selected, with great judgment, we think, as sufficient in reference to the general size of the organ and the requirements of the building in which it is to be heard.

This is the first stop of the kind made by Messrs. Gray and Davison, and does infinite credit to the skill of its voicer. It is very powerful, its quality is, throughout, pure, rich, and brilliant, and it affords, perhaps, especially in the upper part of its compass, the best imitation of the orchestral trumpet we have heard. Under clever management, surprising effects are producible with this *tromba*. The force of its tone enables it to penetrate with perfect clearness through the whole volume of the Great Organ, even when thrice-coupled to the swell, and yet its power is always truly musical. It would be a great improvement, we conceive, on another occasion, to give the performer a control in modifying the energy of its tone by means of some application of the Venetian swell. Nothing else, in short, is wanted to make this stop an unexceptionable substitute in all cases of *obbligato* accompaniment, for the orchestral trumpet.

Other very noticeable peculiarities in the structure of this instrument are, first, an arrangement in the great organ sound-boards, by which all the upper half of the compass in the flue-work, as well as in the reeds, is supplied with a slightly increased air-pressure. We have repeatedly pointed out the value of this application, and are glad to find it here adopted. Its object is to ensure a more even balance of force between the trebles and basses, and, in the present instance, the correctness of the principle is well demonstrated. Second, the introduction of the super and sub-octave couplers between the swell and great organ, which were first applied by Messrs. Gray and Davison to the organ of St. Luke's, Old-street, and by means of which such extraordinary effects of combination are producible; and third, necessitated by the number of couplers—the pneumatic apparatus to the great organ touch; every fresh experiment with which more clearly shows the beauty of the invention, and its paramount utility in all large or mechanically complicated instruments.

The general nature of the mechanical arrangements and the distribution of the work are not fairly discussable points, since they were manifestly dictated to the builders by circumstances superior to all discretion in the matter. There is, perhaps, not another organ in existence in which so much work and of such varied description is enclosed within the same number of cubic feet. The case is now four feet wider than that of the original organ, yet, notwithstanding the increased space, the interior is a mass and jumble of material through which the eye with difficulty penetrates, and into which bodily entrance seems all but impossible. Now, although under such circumstances, it is highly creditable to the builders to find room for the speech of pipes and just action of machinery, the whole thing is, we submit, a great mistake. People who employ architects first, and organ-builders afterwards, and expect master-pieces from the hands of both, should take care that fair-play is administered to each in the progress of his work. We hear a vast fuss made about

piscina, sedilia, credence-tables, rood-screens, and other trumpery, of which neither the names nor uses find mention in the prayer-book, and which cannot be of the slightest service to any one either here or hereafter; while the organ, by far the most important piece of furniture in the church, and all but inevitably necessary to that "Singing" of praise and prayer which no one has yet had the hardihood to reckon less than of but secondary value to any act of worship whatever, is usually thrust about into any hole or corner of the building suggested by the vanity or ignorance of the architect. We do not say this has been literally done at Magdalen Chapel. The organ is to stand on the screen, as heretofore; but, in dread of obscuring a few extra superficial feet of a pretty, but not more than pretty, west window, the organ-case has been limited to dimensions anything but favourable to its internal economy. Either the authorities should have been content with a smaller organ, or should have conceded sufficient space for a larger one. The present arrangement is in the highest degree, unfair to the builders. These errors, however, generally bring their own punishment with them. Wait until something or other gets extensively out of order in the Magdalen organ, and the paymasters may probably discover the cost of attempting to cram a bullock into a goat's skin.

Of the voicing of this instrument, we can speak in the very highest terms of praise. The flue-work is pure and beautiful throughout, and the reeds, without any exception, are among the finest in this country. The mixture-work of the Great Organ is somewhat too tame; but this—judging from the usual style of these builders—we conclude to be, like the omission of the 16-feet stop in the same manual, "done to order." The Choir Organ, especially, is a perfect galaxy of gems. The *Flute d'amour* and *Piccolo* of this manual are both as utterly novel in character as delicious, and the *Corno di Bassotto*, extending throughout the key-board, is the most admirable reed of the kind we ever heard. The limited dimensions of the case compelled the adoption of unusually small scales for the Pedal Organ. But this, in reality, has proved rather an advantage than otherwise; for the tone of this part of the instrument, while sufficient in volume, has a crispness and punctuality of articulation which heavier scales might somewhat have impaired.

The new organ was formally exhibited, for the first time, on the evening of last Thursday week; on which occasion Mr. George Cooper displayed its, no less than his own, powers, to the great delight of a very numerous audience. Mr. Cooper's selection of music was admirably chosen to elicit the numerous varieties of effect of which this instrument is capable; and, as every one at all interested in organ-playing is familiar with the great acquirements of this fine performer, we need only say he fully justified his reputation. The programme was as follows:—

PART I.—*Domine salvam fac reginam*, *S. Wesley*; Andante from sonata, *Mozart*; Organ piece, *H. Smart*; Grand prelude and fugue, *J. S. Bach*; Slow movement from a quartet in D major, *Mendelssohn*; Air, "The trumpet shall sound," Chorus, "To thee, Cherubim," *Händel*.

PART II.—*Alma Virgo*, *Hummel*; Slow movement in A flat from Quartet No. 6 (No. 20, Organists' Manual), *Mendelssohn*; Air, "He layeth the beams," *Händel*; Slow movement from sonata in B flat, *Haydn*; Air, varied, *S. S. Wesley*; Chorus, "He rebuked the Red Sea," *Händel*.

On Saturday evening last another great organist, in a different school of style and mechanism—Mr. W. T. Best—exhibited the Magdalen organ after his manner, and astonished as well as interested a numerous assembly of professors by his masterly performance of the following selection:—

PART I. (Organ Music).—Grand Offertoire (Op. 35), *Lefèbure Wely*, (Organist of La Madeleine, Paris); Trio and Fuga (B minor), *J. S. Bach*; Introduction and Variations on a Russian Church Melody, by Bortniansky, *A. Freyer*; Pedal Study, in octaves, *W. T. Best*.

PART II. (Miscellaneous).—Aria, "Honour and Arms" (*Samson*), *Händel*; Marcia (Op. 24), *F. Spindler*; Gavotta, *J. S. Bach*; Overture, "Ruy Blas," *Mendelssohn*.

Both performances took place in the splendid and architecturally appropriate exhibition room of Messrs. Gray and Davison's manufactory, New-road.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE first performance this season of Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* (on Friday, the 23rd ult.), at Exeter-hall, was recorded last week, in a paragraph. The event, however, was one of importance enough to warrant some further remarks.

Every one knows what the book of *St. Paul* is about, and is acquainted with the plan of the argument. It is only requisite, therefore, to speak of the performance—since to discuss the beauties of the music would be to revive an exhausted story. In many respects the execution on the present occasion, although it still left much to desire, was the most satisfactory for which we have been as yet indebted to the Sacred Harmonic Society. One piece of ill-luck marred in a great degree the pleasure derived from the oratorio. Mr. Sims Reeves, whose reading and declamation of the tenor music—which in the first part involves the preaching, persecution, and martyrdom of Stephen, and in the last the mission of Barnabas, Paul's appointed companion in the work of Christ—are worthy of unqualified praise, and indeed, have not been equalled by any other singer, was so seriously ill, that at the end of the first part, through which he laboured with commendable good will and true artistic feeling, an apology was made for him by Mr. Harrison, president of the Society, and Mr. Benson took his place in the second. The audience, who were fully aware of the disadvantages under which Mr. Reeves was singing, and appreciated his efforts to contend against them, received this announcement with genuine good feeling, and, however they may have been inwardly disappointed, extended that indulgence to which Mr. Benson, who had not enjoyed the benefit of a rehearsal, possessed a just right. Mr. Benson, however, is a good musician, and sang the part he had undertaken extremely well—especially the *cavatina* of Barnabas, "Be thou faithful unto death," in which the *obbligato* accompaniment for violoncello was played to perfection by Sig. Piatti. It is not merely because Mr. Benson came forward at a very short notice that he is to be praised—since a singer accustomed to the sacred style, who is not ready at any emergency with the great and familiar oratorios, would be unworthy the name of artist—but because he sang really well, and under any circumstances was entitled to credit. In the *soprano* part—one of great difficulty and invariable beauty, but chiefly declamatory, and therefore offering fewer chances than ordinary of making what are conventionally termed "effects"—Mad. Clara Novello shone conspicuously. Her recitations were simple and emphatic; and her delivery of the angelic denunciation, "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets!" was admirably pure. No voice was ever more entirely congenial to this ethereal and passionless music than Mad. Novello's, which in quality and transparent clearness of tone has not a superior, more especially in the higher department of its register. Mrs. Lockey was the *contralto*. She, too, has much to declaim and recite, and only one "point" that can be said to stand out boldly from the canvas—viz., the tranquil *arioso*, "But the Lord is mindful of his own," which this able and accomplished singer gave with a richness of tone and a devotional feeling that left nothing to desire. The longest and most arduous part, that of St. Paul—which, as in *Elijah*, Mendelssohn has given to a bass voice—was intrusted to Mr. Weiss, one of our most careful and improving singers. The four airs allotted to the Apostle (two of them with chorus) were all effectively delivered by this gentleman, more particularly "O God have mercy upon me," which in pathos, as well as in peculiarity of form, may be compared to "It is enough!" in *Elijah*. The fiery apostrophe, "Consume them all, Lord Sabaot" —in which Saul, previous to his miraculous conversion, urges on the extermination of Christ's followers—is less suited to the style of Mr. Weiss; but, even in this, the steadiness of his execution lent additional force to the orchestral accompaniments which distinguish it so strongly from all the other music confided to the Lord's appointed missionary. Even the subordinate parts were carefully done, and on this occasion the false witnesses (Messrs. A. Novello and Smythson) were both in time and in tune.

The chief interest of *St. Paul*, however, in spite of the rare

merits of the solo pieces, is concentrated in the choruses, which are throughout picturesque and original, astonishing by their variety as much as they enchant by their melody, and edify by the lofty style in which the sublimer words and sentences are rendered. The *chorales*, or psalm tunes, harmonized with such appropriate gravity—one or two of them, we believe, original themes of Luther, but all of which Mendelssohn, by his especial treatment has made his own—were sung by the chorus with well-measured accent and irreproachable intonation. The best of all was that exquisitely plaintive one in F minor, “To thee, O Lord, I yield my spirit,” which, it may be remembered, when played by one of the military bands, produced so solemn an effect at the funeral obsequies of the Duke of Wellington, just before the body of the illustrious warrior was borne up the nave of the cathedral to its last resting place. This could hardly have been better sung than by the members of the Sacred Harmonic Society. Another surprisingly good performance (although the time was not exactly *con moto*, as the composer has indicated) was the melodious chorus in E flat, “Happy and blest are they who have endured,” in which the soothing consolations of religion are suggested by music with an eloquence rarely paralleled. The very elaborate choruses, too, at the beginning and end of each section of the oratorio, were given with weight and decision—above all, “Oh! great is the depth,” which terminates Part I. In “Lord! thou alone art God,” the trombones were too boisterous, and, moreover, occasionally at fault. The like superfluous loudness was remarkable in the overture (otherwise finely performed); while, in the chorale, “Sleepers, awake!” at the end of the scene of the conversion, by playing *fortissimo* (Mendelssohn has only marked *forte*), these instruments drowned the voices, and spoiled the effect. In the chorus, “Rise up, arise and shine!” (the most magnificent in *St. Paul*) which belongs to the same scene, they were in better keeping; but there is no reason whatever why they should always play so loud. There are gradations of force for trombones and ophicleides, as well as for the other instruments of an orchestra, and they should be strictly attended to. Before leaving the more elaborate choral pieces, we must compliment the singers on the point and vigour with which, for the most part, they executed the fugues. The most intricate of these occurs in the chorus just mentioned, on the words, “Behold, now, total darkness covereth the kingdom.” We have rarely heard this articulated with more unfailing distinctness. The finely-worked fugue on two subjects, in the five-part chorus introductory to Part II., was noticeable for the same desirable quality. As examples of delicacy and thoroughly good choral singing, without noise or violent contrasts, may be cited the tuneful hymn of the Gentiles, “Oh, be gracious, ye immortals,” when Paul and Barnabas are solicited for mercy, and worshipped as the false gods Jupiter and Mercurius; the highly dramatic consultation of the people, “Is this he, who in Jerusalem?” and the seldom-noticed but not less beautiful thanksgiving of the faithful, “See, what love hath the Father bestowed on us” (near the end of the oratorio), none of which do we remember to have heard go better. The impressive pean, “But our God abideth in Heaven,” where the *chorale*—confided to the second *sopranis* and brass instruments—at measured intervals, and with such majesty, towers above all the rest, was equally deserving of praise. “This is Jehovah’s temple,” was, as usual, a scramble, which, in so generally fine a performance, was unpardonable.

On the whole, this last execution of *St. Paul* was highly creditable to the Sacred Harmonic Society, and to Mr. Costa, who must have taken great pains to ensure it. The *tempi* of various pieces should, nevertheless, be reconsidered; some were too quick, but more were too slow, and thus the oratorio took a longer time in performance than the composer intended. Occasionally, the “*sfornandi*” were exaggerated to a degree wholly unwarranted; and we would especially point to the second part of the *contralto* air, “But the Lord is mindful,” where the chords of *diminished sevenths* (we must be technical, having no choice of terms) on the word, “mighty,” were each time so accentuated as to amount to something like caricature. These chords, from their peculiar character, express all that is required, without extra emphasis; and even if Mendelssohn has applied any dis-

tinctive mark to them (of which we were not aware), the whole passage being marked *piano*, the gradation should be managed accordingly. However, in spite of certain faults and shortcomings, *St. Paul* has decidedly made a step in advance. The hall was crammed, and the audience were manifestly delighted. The Sacred Harmonic Society has long been able to boast of three great works, the source of profitable and unfailing attraction—viz., *The Messiah*, *Elijah*, and *The Creation*. Why *Israel in Egypt* and *St. Paul* (either of which, regarded as an oratorio, “*pur sang*,” is worth half a dozen such as the last named of those already in possession) should not be added to the list, it is for the managers alone, sooner or later, to determine.

ST. MARTIN’S HALL.—Mendelssohn’s *St. Paul*, performed by the members of Mr. Hullah’s Upper Singing Class, on Wednesday evening, attracted a very full audience to the St. Martin’s Hall. Mr. Hullah, it would appear, from his announcement of the performance so long beforehand, and from engaging Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves as principal soloists, had made up his mind to present the oratorio in a very complete and efficient manner to his subscribers. If he failed to do so, it was not his fault. The chorus and band were both excellent, and indicated that careful rehearsals had been provided, while the names of the solo vocalists were guaranteed of efficiency. The indisposition of Mr. Sims Reeves, however, which precluded him from terminating his part in *St. Paul*, at Exeter Hall, on Friday night, still incapacitated him from attending at St. Martin’s Hall on Wednesday; while a recent domestic affliction would have sufficiently accounted for the absence of Mrs. Sims Reeves. She has also been suffering from an attack of influenza.

In order that there may be no misapprehension, innocent or perverse on this matter, and because Mr. Sims Reeves, like all artists who occupy an eminent position, rejoices in the possession of some “very kind friends,” we reprint Mr. Hullah’s circular, together with the medical certificates:—

ST. MARTIN’S HALL.—Mr. Hullah regrets to have to announce, that in consequence of severe indisposition, Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves are prevented from making their appearance this evening. The following certificates reached St. Martin’s Hall at half-past two o’clock to-day.—“I hereby certify that Mr. Sims Reeves is prevented by indisposition leaving the house, or singing this evening. John Erichsen, F.R.C.S. Feb. 28th, 1855.”—“I hereby certify that Mrs. Sims Reeves cannot leave the house, in consequence of an attack of influenza, and will be prevented singing this evening. John Erichsen, F.R.C.S. Feb. 28th, 1855.”—Under these circumstances the indulgence of the audience is requested for Mrs. Endersohn and Mr. Herberle, who at a short notice have kindly undertaken to sing the music assigned in the programme to Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves. Wednesday, Feb. 28th, 1855.

Under these circumstances Mr. Hullah was obliged to do the best he could; and Mr. Herberle and Mrs. Endersohn supplied the places of Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves.

The other principals were Miss Palmer and Mr. Thomas. The lady has a tolerable *mezzo-soprano* voice, and displays some knowledge of her art. Her vocalization, however, might be improved, as she has some of the most acknowledged faults of the English school. The supporters of this young lady do not act wisely in making a special demonstration in her favour every time she sings. Eulogy is not criticism, and the only effect of this public display on the part of Miss Palmer’s ill-advising patrons, will be to turn her head and make her fancy herself an accomplished artist, when she has really much to learn and much to unlearn. The boisterous encore Miss Palmer received in “But the Lord is mindful,” was certainly not warranted by the capability displayed in its interpretation. Nevertheless, we must do justice to the young lady. Her voice, with proper training, may be turned to excellent account, and there is evidence of strong intelligence in what she does. Mr. Thomas has a good bass voice and sang the music of Paul very carefully. Mr. Herberle worked hard with the tenor music, and not unsuccessfully, while Mrs. Endersohn sang the *soprano* part with great effect. The performance of Mendelssohn’s great work was, on the whole, one of the most creditable we have heard under Mr. Hullah’s zealous direction. The next oratorio will be *The Creation*. A repetition of *St. Paul* is also decided on.

ROYAL ACADEMY CONCERTS.

It would appear from present arrangements, that the concerts "for the exhibition of the students" are to be limited to two this year, and that the Hanover-square Rooms are abandoned for the music-rooms of the institution in Tenterden-street, where winter concerts used to be held in the ancient time. Be that as it may, the first of two performances took place on Tuesday afternoon, in presence of a large number of the immediate friends and patrons of the institution. The programme was as follows :—

PART I.

Oratorio, "The Last Judgment" Spohr.

PART II.

Concerto in F minor (First Movement) Pianoforte, Sterndale Bennett.

Mr. C. Hirst.

Song, "Jerusalem," Miss Whyte (*St. Paul*) ... Mendelssohn.

Recitative and Air, "Angels, ever bright and fair," *Händel*.

(*Theodora*) Miss Hughes.

Song, "O Lord! have mercy," Mr. Walter Bolton Pergolesi.

First Concerto, Violin, Mr. White De Beriot.

Offertorium, "Ave Maria," Miss Banks (Clarinet

obbligato, Mr. F. Godfrey) Cherubini.

Chorus, "Father, we adore Thee" ... Haydn.

The above selection, good as it was, possessed little interest for any but the students themselves, and their friends—since there was not a single new composition. Now we like very well to know how the young aspirants are progressing in the arts of singing and playing upon instruments; but we like much better to be made acquainted with their progress in the still more important branch of composition. It is new music we want, far more than singers and players, of whom we have enough and to spare. But this is for after-consideration.

Spohr's fine oratorio (uncurtailed) was, on the whole, very creditably performed. The band and chorus were as usual—which is to say, not nearly so good as they were some years ago, and by no means what we have a right to anticipate from the Royal Academy of Music. The solo vocal parts were sustained by Misses Spiller, White, Bignal, and Mackenzie, Messrs. George Dolby, J. F. Goodban, Herberle, and Walter Bolton—and, we may say with justice, more than respectably.

The second part began with an attempt to execute the opening movement of Sterndale Bennett's fourth pianoforte concerto—the fourth printed one, be it remembered, since there is another, in the same key (F minor), and almost as good, which the composer played at one of the Academy concerts in the Hanover-square Rooms, so far back as 1836. (Mr. Bennett's reason for holding back this concerto is inexplicable.) The "attempt" was made, and not without a certain degree of success, by Mr. C. Hirst, pupil of Mr. Potter. There was both merit and promise in the execution; but a great deal of practice is indispensable before Mr. Hirst can make himself thoroughly master of the bravura passages—those especially towards the end of the movement, which are difficult and demand great freedom in both hands, a demand which Mr. Hirst at present fails to supply. Miss Whyte has a pleasant voice; but her intonation was "shaky" in the beautiful soprano song from *St. Paul*. Miss Hughes does not advance as we could desire; but the more she studies such airs as that from *Theodora* (and indeed *Händel's* songs in general) the better will be her chance of making satisfactory progress. Mr. Walter Bolton has really a fine bass voice, but has not yet mastered the art of using it to advantage. He "drawls" too much, and is deficient in emphasis. Pergolesi is a good study for him, however; and *Händel* better still.

Mr. White made a favourable impression in the hackneyed concerto of De Beriot, of which we confess we are getting heartily sick. He is a pupil of M. Sainton, under whose guidance he has acquired much. He is still, however, comparatively a beginner, with style and mechanism equally unformed; but he appears to have a fair bow-arm, and there was a certain *mordant* (as the French say) in one or two of the display-passages suggestive of something to come. Miss Banks sang the *offertorium* of Cherubini very well; and was nicely accompanied by Mr. F. Godfrey, in the clarinet *obbligato*. Haydn's chorus went but "so so."

Sundry changes and modifications have been instituted with regard to the future management of the Academy, to which we shall shortly take occasion to allude. At present, want of space invites us to close our observations.

MUSICAL WINTER EVENINGS.

The second of these pleasant and instructive entertainments came off on Thursday evening, at Willis's Rooms, before a much more numerous assembly than attended the first. The snow had melted; the frost had vanished; the wind had shifted, from east to west, from north to south, and Mr. Ella was fairly embedded, as he sat on his director's "sofa," amidst a *parterre* of fair, blooming, and luxuriant aristocracy. It was a sight charming to contemplate, but fit to excite as much envy as satisfaction, and more jealousy, on the part of those near the protecting screen, than what may be simply termed "gratulation." We did not gratulate Mr. Ella, but wished ourselves where he was, in his very place, like Acteon, surrounded by nymphs, only too kind and tender-hearted to change him into a quadruped, as the naughty Diana did the adventurous huntsman, who paid for his audacity by being worried and torn piece-meal by ill-bred hounds of his own breeding. But to leave myth, and return to music, here is the programme :

Quartet, G minor. No. 74	-	-	-	-	-	Haydn.
Trio, E flat. Op. 1. Pianoforte, &c.	-	-	-	-	-	Beethoven.
Quartet, F major. No. 7. Op. 59.	-	-	-	-	-	Beethoven.
Solo, Violoncello (MS.)	-	-	-	-	-	Platti.
Morceaux pour Pianoforte	-	-	-	-	-	Pauer.

Executants :—1st Violin—*Herr Ernst*. 2nd Violin—*Herr Goffie*.

Viola—*Mr. Hill*. Violoncello—*Signor Piatti*. Pianist—*Herr Pauer*.

Mr. Ella tells us that the quartet of Haydn was "an especial favourite of the famous Baillot." For that we do not care two-pence. There are others who like and appreciate good music quite as well as "the famous Baillot" (Mr. Ella and ourselves among the number): and such a piece of unaffected beauty as the *largo* of this same quartet wants no advocacy from anybody. The whole quartet was played to perfection, and with the desired *simplicity* of style, by Ernst and his talented associates. The first trio of Beethoven was well executed. It was given for the first time at Mr. Ella's sittings, but not, we trust, for the last, since it is sterling music, though early and Beethovenian primitive—fresh and vigorous as the cry of a new-born giant. Herr Pauer's reading was manly and unpretending. His touch was a little heavy in the *adagio*; but let that pass; every artist has his idiosyncracy, and that of Herr Pauer is *weight* of finger. Mr. Ella says of this *adagio*, that it "alone" is "worth all the pianoforte music of living composers put together"—which (where are Richard and Robert?) is rather hard, we must say, on living composers and their music. Mr. Ella further proounds, that there is no "trio more sparkling with original melodies and effects of harmony than this first published work of Beethoven"—which would, we surmise, considerably astonish, and not inconsiderably pique, the composer of the later trios (those in B flat, D, and E flat in particular) of that sovereign master, had he been alive to hear it recorded. How now?—did Beethoven make no progress after Op. 1? Did not his genius ripen—his talent grow—his knowledge gather and expand?

Seriously—Mr. Ella adheres too pertinaciously to the plan of extolling the wares he has for immediate sale. Every programme, and every player, is the best—until the next comes. This will not do with the initiated, and with those who have read "the books." When Wagner comes, Herr Praeger must plant him upon the Director of the Musical Union, who stands notably in want of a "flapper" (now and then). A man may surely sit upon a canopy at a sitting ("séance") and yet be modest and discreet. The "*expellas furem tam usque*" of Flaccus can hardly apply to Mr. Ella, whose nature, though by no means *flaccid*, is malleable and impressible. *Verbum sat.*

The immense Razumoffsky" (it is a "Razumoffsky"—most fortunate of Russian nobles, to be thus immortalised!—not a Quartet), the immense "Razumoffsky" in F was magnificently "interpreted." Ernst, who is every day playing more admi-

rably, was never grander, nor more passionate, than in the *adagio*; Patti was incomparable; Goffrie and Hill were all that could reasonably be desired. It was indeed a glorious performance, and the great "point" of the concert.

The new solo of Patti—on the popular barcarole in Donizetti's *Marino Faliero*—was one of the most masterly and marvellous displays of execution to which we ever listened. "The little black Italian"—as the great ruddy Molique (who wrote him a concerto, which was something like a concerto) styles him—fairly achieved impossibilities without number. He was applauded "to the echo." The "morceaux" of Herr Pauer (*solois*) were two light "caprices" (of his own, we "calculate")—a *romance* and a *tarantella*, which bore a strong family resemblance to some hundreds of romances and tarantellas we wot of. There is no absolute necessity why the number of them should be increased. As to the playing, we repeat, Herr Pauer's setting is too heavy for the lighter description of musical stones—precious or ordinary. He is a jeweller to mount porphyry and pebble, cairn-gorm and granite. Sparks and brilliants are not fit for him.

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

"Gloomy winter's now awn',
Soft the westlin' breezes blaw."

So sings your poet Burns, so sings your own correspondent, happy to be at length released from the coughs, colds, and catarrhs prevailing in all the houses; and from the sleighing, slipping, and sliding reigning triumphant in all the streets of Paris during the last six weeks. And lo! the singing birds come out, decked in their gayest plumage, to welcome the approach of spring; and the Grand-Opéra, Opéra-Italien, and Opéra-Comique present us old friends with new faces, in the *Prophète*, the *Barbiere*, the *Trovatore*, and the *Diamants de la Couronne*.

Madame Borghi-Mamo having made her husband's happiness complete, by presenting him with a pledge of fond affection, is necessarily prevented for a time from exercising the art vocal on the stage of the Italiens, and is doubtless keeping her voice in good condition for the London season (when is that to commence?) by humming lullabies to her new-born babe. Madame Pauline Viardot-Garcia was, therefore, engaged to sing the music of the Bohémienne in the *Trovatore*; but Madame Viardot declined unless she could make her *début* as Rosina in the *Barbiere*. This was of course agreed to, and she has already sung twice in that opera. Madame Viardot is unquestionably a great artist—so much of an artist indeed, that she sometimes forgets to be natural. There is no spontaneity in her singing; no *abandon* in her acting. All is fixed, settled, arranged, and carefully studied in advance. Mad. Viardot undertakes no part in which she does not shew the intelligent woman, and the thoroughly-educated vocalist; she has a talent of the highest order, but wholly deficient in genius. Her acting wants repose, and she is always seemingly on the look-out for something to do. Would she but study the byplay of Rachel, or of Sophie Cruvelli in the prison scene of *Fidelio*, she would then learn how much can be conveyed by gentle movements to and fro, by an undistorted play of the countenance, and by slight though expressive gestures. When these two great actresses have nothing to do, *they do it*; but Mad. Viardot *cannot do it* when in that position, and she is unable to remain quiescent for a moment. However, her Rosina possesses the merit of careful study, and she sings the music with wonderful facility of art, though with a display of *fioriture* which Rossini never imagined.

The ever-fresh, ever-charming, ever-delicate, ever-sparkling, *Diamants de la Couronne*, of Daniel Auber (may he live for ever!—and so he will in his works), was produced at the Opéra-Comique, on Friday. Caroline Duprez was Catarina, Coudere, Don Henrique, and that admirable *buffo* actor and singer (though, Ronconi-like, he has no voice), Riquier, was the Duke de Campo-Mayor. Madlle. Duprez sang the music gracefully and well; but those who heard the vocal queen of the Boulevards (Marie Cabel) in the same part in London, declare that Marie *Première*

triumphantly bears off the palm from Caroline of the Russians and "Star of the North." However, the audience were delighted, and listened to the fluent and sparkling melodies with which the opera abounds, from the overtures to the *finale*, with as great an amount of enjoyment as if they had never heard a note of them before. Madlle. Boulart, by the way, though nervous, was a very agreeable Diana, and the other parts were well played by M. M. Ponchard and Nathan.

At the Opéra, Madame Stoltz was to make her *rentrée* to-night in *Fides*; but she is indisposed, and the performance has been retarded in consequence. When you next hear from me, however, I shall have to tell you of her success, since success it is certain to be. For months, nay, for years, she has been studying the part; and when Rosina Stoltz is determined to triumph, she triumphs invariably. Meanwhile a new dancer appeared on the boards last Saturday, in the person of Mademoiselle Beretta, an Italian—fifteen years of age—who "threw off" in the *Diable à Quatre*. Madlle. Beretta is extremely short, extremely strong, and extremely plain, with an infantine expression of face, and a muscular development of calf. She performs the most venturesous *tours de force* with the greatest ease and agility; but has yet to learn that a *danses* should be a graceful no less than a powerful specimen of humanity. For my own part, I would gladly bargain for less strength and more grace. However, Madlle. Beretta is fifteen, and may grow; she is fifteen, and may learn; she is fifteen, and may catch a ray of the grace which encircles her countrywoman, Carolina Rosati, with whom she is about to dance in a new *ballet*, now in preparation.

The Palais Royal has produced three vaudevilles all in one night, and all successful. The first, called *La Perle de la Canelière*, is a charming provincial farce, a veritable dish of *bouillabaisse* (Do you like bouillabaisse?—the best is to be had at the "Petit Madrid"), served up hot and savoury, by those chiefs of good vaudeville cookery, Marc-Michel and Labiche. The husband of Madame Marcus has been eaten by the Caffres (he was young and tender), who swallowed the whole of the unhappy man, except, as an Irishman would say, "the buckles of his braces." His widow is disconsolate; but anxious to supply his place (she was a Marseillaise, and ladies from the south do not approve of widows' weeds), she goes to Beautendon, the perfumer, whose son would suit her; but this juvenile is about to be married to a lady rich in ingots and argosies, whom Beautendon *père* has chosen for his son. Beautendon *père* therefore determines to break off the match, and, in the disguise of a sailor, whom the Caffres have only half eaten (he was tough and sinewy), he comes in the name of the deceased Marcus, and forbids the widow to supply his place, on pain of being revisited by his angry ghost. To cut short the story, it turns out that Marcus has escaped, and he returns to his widow, so that all the world is content, especially the public. Fancy Grasset, half-eaten by Caffres, with husky voice and dismal face, threatening the widow with ghostly terror! And fancy, also, Alice Duval, with her buxom figure, and jolly face, singing two or three nice ballads, and looking as clean, as fresh, and as gay as any Marseillaise widow anxious to find a good substitute for a deceased husband. The two other pieces, *Le Bonheur de vivre aux Champs*, and *Le Roman chez la portière*, were of the usual Palais-Royal stamp, and defy description.

(From another Correspondent.)

At the Opéra-Impériale, in consequence of the illness of Mad. Stoltz, Auber's *Muette de Portici* was given in lieu of the *Prophète*. At the Théâtre-Français a one-act piece, by M. Méry, will be produced this week. On Sunday, *La Dame Blanche* was played at the Opéra-Comique, and followed by *Galathée*. *Le Chien du Jardinier* and *Miss Fawcette* continue to attract good houses; and a neat little piece by M. Justin Cadaux, entitled, *Les deux Jaket*, has been given with success, after *Les Diamants de la Couronne*. At the Théâtre-Lyrique the double success of *Robin des Bois* and the *Muletier* (with Marie Cabel) continues—so that the management does not require any novelty at present. The benefit of M. Kopp, a favourite comedian, is announced at the Variétés. Among the pieces, which he will

perform on that occasion, is one by M. d'Ennery, called *Nicodème sur la Terre*, and a *monologue de circonstance*, entitled *Un homme en chemise*, which excites great curiosity. At the *Gaieté La Grâce de Dieu* and *Le Courier de Lyon*, are running their successful career. The *Cosaques* is underlined in the bill.

Madlle. Rachel, as I have already stated, will not leave on the first of March. She will go once more through her classical répertoire, and it is already whispered (though I cannot affirm it positively), that she cannot leave before the month of May. This will, at all events, be so much gained.

BERLIN.

(From our own Correspondent.)

On Sunday last, M. Roger appeared at the Royal Opera House, as George Brown in *La Dame Blanche*. The house was crowded in every part. The fourth and last *Soirée* of the Königlicher Domchor took place in the rooms of the Singacademie and was decidedly the most attractive of the series. The great feature of the evening was Sebastian Bach's motet: "Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf" for eight voices, with which the concert opened. The execution of this difficult work was very satisfactory. The Domchor then sang Menegali's "Ave, Regina," Jomelli's "Lux aeterna," and Mozart's "Ave verum," concluding with Cherubini's "Credo."

The *Concertmeister* Herren Leopold and Moritz Ganz gave a grand vocal and instrumental concert, in the room of the Schauspielhaus, on Tuesday the 20th inst. Every place was occupied. It is not astonishing that the public were determined not to let an opportunity slip of hearing, on the same evening, such artists as Miss Arabella Goddard and M. Roger. The concert opened with an overture of Beethoven. Madlle. Agnes Büry then sang an air from *Ernani*, and Mad. Parish-Alvars performed, on the pedal-harp, two of her late husband's compositions—a romance and a march. The gem of the evening, however, was the execution of Mendelssohn's second pianoforte concerto in D minor, with orchestral accompaniment, by Miss Arabella Goddard. As I might possibly be accused of partiality were I to describe the effect produced upon myself, individually, by the performance of my fair and talented young countrywoman, I will quote the critic of the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, who says:—

"The English pianist dominates her instrument with a degree of calm repose, indicating the consciousness that in her note book the word *difficultly* does not exist. While other pianists, when seated at the pianoforte, appear, as it were, to be scrambling over hedges and ditches, and often shake their long artistic locks like the mane of some wild animal, Miss Goddard seems as if she were resting herself, and merely playing for her own amusement. In the almost severe reserve of her demeanour, the fair artist resembles Nature, who also conceals the sweet kernel in the rough shell, the gentle sound in the hard metal, and the burning fire in the cold stone. It is only in the tones she produces that this *virtuosa* lives and breathes. In force, touch, rapid execution, and, what in our estimation is worth even more, namely, *purity*, Miss Arabella Goddard is equal to the very best pianist we ever heard, and if she is excelled by any, it is in charlatanism alone."

M. Roger sang the *Erlkönig* with great applause; the *bénéficiaires* played several pieces on the violin and the violoncello; and the members of the Königlicher Domchor sang some choruses. Altogether the concert was one of the best we have had for a very long time. I may as well add that the critic of the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* expresses himself, in reference to Miss Goddard, as follows:—"We rank Miss Arabella Goddard among the very best pianists of the present day. With a thorough understanding of the subject, she played Mendelssohn's Concerto in D minor in the most masterly manner. Her perfect technical skill completely overcomes every difficulty offered by the music, and, despising any inartistic additions, she finds her greatest reward in rendering it with scrupulous truth and finish."

Miss Arabella Goddard is engaged to perform at the house of Lady Bloomfield, wife of the English ambassador here. Her own concert is just announced to take place on Friday (March 2), at the Sing-Academie. She will play Mendelssohn's first trio, some variations of Händel, a sonata by Mozart, and a brilliant *fantasia*. One of our most famous pianists and composers for

the piano here, Dr. Theodore Kullak, who has heard the young English *virtuosa* several times, is profuse in his eulogies. I will not tell you all he said, or you would set it down as *puff-prepense*.

VIENNA.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THERE has been absolutely nothing calling for especial notice at the Imperial Opera House since my letter of last week. On the 13th, a concert was given in Seuffert's Saloons, by M. Jacques Grün, a violinist pupil of Professor Böhm. The young artist played a *concert militaire*, by Lipinski, a *chaconne* of Sebastian Bach, and the "Trémolo," as it is styled, of M. De Beriot, a silly parody on one of Beethoven's most melodious slow movements. In obedience to what appears now to be the rule at every concert, namely, that an infant prodigy should be exhibited, we had the nine-year old pianist, Emma Braun, who performed *Herr Blumenthal's Sommeil interrompu*.

Some time since, there was a general report that Meyerbeer was engaged in the composition of a *Wiegendie*, or *Cradle Song*, for the Empress, but I am able to state, on the very best authority—a letter from the great musician himself—that the report is devoid of truth. The management of the Imperial Opera House offered to renew Madlle. Tietjen's engagement, which has still nearly a year to run, but the terms demanded by the young lady were so high, that all idea of acceding to them was ultimately abandoned.

FOREIGN.

BORDEAUX.—M. Vieuxtemps, the violinist, has been here giving concerts. He has left for Paris.

MADRID.—An accident, which might have been attended with the most fatal results, occurred at the Théâtre-Italien, a short time since, to two of the principal singers. In the second act of *Sappho*, at the moment when Mesdames Gazzaniga and Nantier-Didiée were singing their duet near the footlights, the veil of the last-named lady caught fire, and she was in an instant enveloped in flames. Madame Gazzaniga threw her arms round Madame Nantier-Didiée, and endeavoured to extinguish the flames, which, however, seized on her own dress, and involved her in a like danger. The consternation of the house may be imagined. The curtain fell suddenly, and for a while the audience were left in the most dreadful uncertainty as to what had happened to the two ladies. The *régisseur* of the theatre fortunately came on after the lapse of a few minutes, and put an end to all apprehension, by stating that the flames had been extinguished; and that, with the exception of the dresses being burned, and Madame Didiée's hair singed, no further injury had taken place.

NEISSE.—The Association for Instrumental Music, upon the model of the Berlin Sinfonie-Soiréen, has now been in existence three years, and is in a prosperous condition. The musical department is under the direction of Herr Stuckenschmidt. In the course of the present winter, the association has performed several important works, among which were symphonies and overtures by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Cherubini. As its name indicates, the association devotes its attention principally to instrumental music, the only exception being in favour of such works as Mendelssohn's *Sommernachtstraum* and Beethoven's *Egmont*.

FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAINE.—The annual subvention of 16,000 (£1,600) already granted to the theatre is prolonged for three years.

GRAU.—Dr. Franz Liszt has promised to direct an original mass of his own composition at the consecration of the cathedral. Is this the old Bonn *cantata* revived?

DRESDEN.—According to report, Mad. Bürde-Ney is engaged for the ensuing season at the Royal Italian Opera, London. Mad. Jenny Lind Goldschmidt, Herr Julius Schuloff, the pianist, and the *Liedertafel* gave concerts in the month just past.

HAMBURGH.—Herr Richard Wagner's opera of *Lohengrin* may be said to have been successful, but it will certainly not prove beneficial to the treasury, in spite of the great exertions of every performer engaged, and the scrupulous attention that has been paid to the *mise-en-scène*. The brothers Wieniawski are playing at the Stadthäuser. *Santa Chiara* will shortly be produced for a benefit.

ERFURT.—Meyerbeer's *Etoile du Nord* will be produced immediately.

NOTICE.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—*It is necessary to inform advertisers that we cannot undertake to extract advertisements ourselves, for insertion, from other papers. Whatever advertisements are intended for the MUSICAL WORLD must be sent to the Office by the proper authorities or their agents. This will render all mistakes impossible for the future.*

In accordance with a new Postal Regulation, it is absolutely necessary that all copies of THE MUSICAL WORLD, transmitted through the post, should be folded so as to expose to view the red stamp.

It is requested that all letters and papers for the Editor be addressed to the Editor of the Musical World, 28, Holles Street; and all business communications to the Publishers, at the same address.

CORRESPONDENTS are requested to write on one side of the paper only, as writing on both sides necessitates a great deal of trouble in the printing.

To ORGANISTS.—*The articles on the new organs, published in the volume for 1854, will be found in the following numbers: 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 42, 45, 47, 49, 51.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A MUSICAL STUDENT.—*It was published by CRAMER, BEALE and Co., Regent-street. We do not know the address of the author. Consult RUDALL, ROSE, and "CARTE'S Musical Directory for 1855."*

AMATEUR.—*HAYDN wrote quartets before BOCCHERINI composed any of his quintets. Our Correspondent forgets the advanced age to which HAYDN lived.*

CRITIC.—*M. F. A. FIORENTINO is a Neapolitan. The ease and elegance of his French style has surprised many (Frenchmen especially) besides CRITICUS.*

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 3RD, 1855.

THERE are several other things, besides war, which England, thoroughly practical as she is called, does not manage exactly as well as her continental neighbours. Among these, national opera occupies an unfortunately conspicuous position. Trial after trial, failure after failure, would almost seem to date the firm establishment of this much-desired institution—this mingled hope and despair of every musician—coevally with the arrival of the Millennium. After running through a lustrum of disastrous seasons at Drury-lane Theatre and elsewhere, English opera may, by this time, be pronounced extinct—so far extinct, at least, that the small and doubtful doings at the Surrey Theatre, an occasional spasmodic effort at the Strand, Mr. Webster's present shadowy allusion to Auber's *Le Dieu et la Bayadère*, and (we really must include everything) “the grand operas” at the Grecian Saloon, are all that remain to indicate its existence in the metropolis. We know we are on the edge of very ticklish ground. We know that, next to a fresh arrival of the sea-serpent, there is no staler provocative of jest and incredulity than the mention of English opera. But we are not, now at least, about to inquire why this should be; or why that which invariably succeeds elsewhere should as invariably fail here. Nor are we about to attempt anything towards precipitating a fresh experiment and its certain consequence. We have taken up the subject, indeed, rather with a view to warn than to encourage.

It had been long currently reported that the lessee of Drury-lane, proud of his dramatic efforts in the “great national theatre,” was sanguine of success with English

opera, and resolutely bent on the speculation; that he was to begin with a translated version of Meyerbeer's *Etoile du Nord*, got up with we know not what extent of “unprecedented magnificence;” that this would be the commencement of a new era; and more to the same purpose. There is no doubt that the project was seriously entertained. Its fulfilment, however, was then, as now, in the highest degree improbable. Should some evil genius urge Mr. Smith to persevere, it will become our bounden duty earnestly to beseech musicians of any position—players, singers, or composers—to reject all proposals of co-operation. It must fail; and every new failure adds to the difficulties already in the way of the permanent establishment of national opera.

English opera failed, season after season, under a former management, at Drury Lane, because through unaccountable perversity of judgment, *music* was made to take the second place in the account. “Scenery, dresses, and decorations,” processions, banners, and pageants, had the first and largest nibble at the treasury. What remained? Barely sufficient to pay an indifferent company of principals, a feeble band, and a worse chorus. In spite of accumulating experience—that mere show has no lasting attraction for the public, and that those who visit an operatic theatre naturally come to *hear*, and, as naturally, are disposed to insist that what they hear shall be of the best attainable quality—the *spectacle* system was persevered in. Music was treated as the accident, rather than the thing essential. The stage-manager usurped the sovereignty of the *chefs d'orchestre*; processions were rehearsed instead of *finales*; and failure—musically speaking, well-merited—was the inevitable result. No better system can, with reason, be expected from the existing management. We, therefore, caution musicians of character and talent to have no participation in any forthcoming plan for English opera at Drury Lane. They can do nothing to help it, and further disaster will only rivet closer the fetters that now enchain the efforts of native art.

Still, the time may be not distant when, under different circumstances, and with a rational view of the matter, a native opera may be solidly established in this country. So far as talent is concerned, there never was, in our memory, a period so ripe for the undertaking. For the trouble of collecting, and with the tact necessary for adjusting the small difficulties of artistic jealousy, a company of principal singers of positive merit, and, at least, of sufficient excellence for all our purposes, could be assembled. One of the finest orchestras in the world could, notoriously, be selected in London, and no obstacle need interfere with the formation of a magnificent chorus. In fact, everything within the range of *ensemble* could be as perfectly accomplished here as elsewhere; and this, after all, has infinitely more to do with the success of an opera than the effulgence, be it what it may, of particular stars. But for all this is wanted some ruling spirit, some managing director hard of head and strong of purpose; but, more and chiefly, *money*. No slight venture will suffice. The purse that would successfully back up English Opera, must be long enough to withstand, if requisite, the brunt of three unprosperous seasons. So entirely has the idea of national opera fallen into discredit, that no imaginable amount of excellence could, we firmly believe, in the course of a single season, resuscitate public faith.

Meanwhile, until the time arrives that the trial may be commenced on some such foundation as that we have indicated, we can but repeat our entreaty to English musicians to hold aloof from all trifling and unworthy experiments.

MENDELSSOHN'S *St. Paul* seems destined at length to occupy its proper place in the repertory of our Sacred Harmonic Societies, and in the estimation of the public generally. Though written ten years in advance of *Elijah*, it has never yet acquired the same degree of popularity as its successor, which, in an unusually brief period of time, won universal favour, and, by unanimous consent, was ranked with the masterpieces of Händel. *St. Paul* stands, with respect to *Elijah*, much in the same position as *Israel in Egypt* with respect to the *Messiah*. Acknowledged by musicians and the most respectable judges to be a composition of scarcely inferior merit, and estimated even higher (erroneously, no doubt), by many of the most eminent German authorities, Mendelssohn's first oratorio has never—even in England, where his genius has had the widest influence—succeeded, as did *Elijah* from the beginning, in reaching the heart of those multitudes who love the sacred music of the great masters as it were by a natural instinct, and, without being able to analyse what they feel, are, perhaps, the real dispensers of enduring fame.

Like *Israel in Egypt*, *St. Paul* was a comparatively early production; and, as in the case of *Israel*, the difficulties it presents (which are much more perplexing than those of *Elijah*) have stood in the way of its immediate appreciation—for the simple reason that they have rendered an efficient execution less easy of attainment. For one really good performance of *Israel in Egypt*, or *St. Paul*, we have had twenty at least of *The Messiah* and *Elijah*. That Händel and Mendelssohn had both achieved a more perfect command of their art, and were thus enabled to submit their ideas more fluently, and to obtain grand and varied effects with simpler means, when they composed the oratorios last named, cannot be denied; but, as the same genius is demonstrated in the earlier as in the later works, the readier appreciation accorded to the beauty and sublimity of *The Messiah* and *Elijah* must be evidently attributed to the greater freedom of expression for which they are remarkable. The themes are almost of equal dignity and interest. The miracles wrought in Egypt by the power of the Almighty on behalf of his persecuted children, were but the foreshadowing of his infinite mercy in sending his Son to save the whole world; while the mission of Paul, as the most illustrious of Christ's preachers, may, without profanity, be regarded as a parallel to that of Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, who warned the land of its iniquities, and, by working miracles, brought back the swerving Israelites to the worship of the true and only God. It is worthy of note that Händel's triumph was in the New Testament, Mendelssohn's in the Old. Had the author of *St. Paul* been spared to complete his *Christus*—and, with that, the trilogy of sacred musical epics, which, from the first, he had conceived—he might have equalled *The Messiah*, and have won a double victory. But it was willed otherwise; and the world of art, that laments his loss—a loss which, for a time only it is to be hoped, has arrested music in its onward course—may be consoled with the reflection that, though Mendelssohn died so young, he was allowed to live long enough to accomplish so much.

A "Season-Ticket Holder," has addressed the following letter to a weekly contemporary, on the subject of the music at the Crystal Palace, which has begun to engross a considerable degree of attention, not only on the part of those concerned in the management of the great building at Sydenham, but on that of the public in general:—

To the Editor of the Spectator.

"SIR,—Being deeply interested in the success of the Crystal Palace, I am anxious to call attention to a resolve which is rumoured to have been come to by the directors to diminish its musical attractions, and which, if carried out, may tend irreparably to damage the financial prospects of the Company. A cry has been got up that the music is a mistake, since it draws attention from the real purpose for which the edifice was intended. Visitors, it is complained, throng round the musicians, and remain near them, instead of devoting their principal time to the various courts or the stalls of exhibitors. To correct this independent manifestation of taste, a determination is said to have been formed to fritter down the band. It must be remembered, however, that the building was intended not as a partial but as a coherent home of art. The thing most wanted by the English nation up to the present time was a vast hall, where music might be cultivated in the midst of all its sister refinements; and the fact that the public avail themselves of it now it is furnished, is the highest testimony that the Company should desire of the advantage of their arrangements in this respect. An interior like that of the Crystal Palace, without music, seems as dull as the face of a deaf man, or a lawn when a fountain is removed from it. All that remains is beautiful, but a feature that was part of the whole is gone. There is everything in the Crystal Palace to charm the eye; but the ear has its claims, and ought not to be sent away hungry and dissatisfied. Moreover, even if music, instead of being one of the most divine charms of every place dedicated to refinement, could be designated as an inferior attraction, it would be useless to hope for success by endeavouring to force people to attend to other points in preference, by denying them gratification on this. The public cannot be schooled out of their natural impulses, and every attempt to do so has always, in a financial sense, proved a miserable failure. The Company rightly rely upon the delightful effect of their contemplated fountains; but these, after all, are only intended as another gratification of the eye, and, in point of scientific or moral interest, are not to be compared for a moment with the effect of high musical compositions.

"It is earnestly to be hoped, therefore, that the Directors will perceive they could scarcely venture on a more dangerous experiment than that of curtailment in this respect. From what has been said on the subject, there is reason to believe that even the mere broaching of such a point will seriously affect their income when the next period comes round for the renewal of season-tickets; on which, after all, their permanent reliance must be placed. They must also bear in mind, that any attempted economy by simply diminishing the number of performers essential to the size of the building may prove as fatal as extinguishing them altogether. In such a place there is no medium between the sublime and the ridiculous, and it would be better to have nothing than a feeble display. The Company are well aware that in the winter they would be deserted but for the pleasure of the music and the agreeable temperature of the Tropical division, and in summer an open air promenade without an efficient band would be a very short-lived gratification.

"A SEASON-TICKET HOLDER.

"London, 16th February, 1855."

The writer seems to argue that music *quand même* is an indispensable adjunct to the attractions of the Crystal Palace. We deny it *in toto*. Music can only be desirable if presented on such a scale as to render it, like the other art-manifestations in the palace, as much a matter of instruction as of amusement. In any other sense it is an unworthy toy—a trivial recreation—wholly out of keeping with the general design. Moreover, the "Season Ticket Holder" is quite wrong in believing that the public will go all the way to Sydenham to listen to a very ordinary brass band. The idea is preposterous.

The editor of *The Spectator* has annexed a foot note to the letter we have quoted, in which, while professing to agree with his correspondent, he plainly shows that he entertains a wholly distinct view of the subject—a view which, we have little doubt, will not satisfy the conscience of the "Season Ticket Holder," apparently a mere partisan of the band of foreigners, whose position as fixtures in the Crystal Palace looks very like a "job,"—one of the "German" family of "jobs," indeed, which this country has so much to complain of in other departments of the public commonwealth. We

append the *Spectator's* note, with which we hold in part, but from which we discline in substance:—

"[We entirely agree with our correspondent. If the Crystal Palace has proved less attractive than was expected, it is an Irish way of mending matters still further to lessen its attractiveness by removing one of the present sources of enjoyment: for it is because music is *too* attractive, it seems, that the Directors think of suppressing or spoiling it. It is true that visitors, once there, will be glad to attend more to other objects when they have no longer any music worth hearing to listen to; but do the Directors consider how many people, in that case, will stay away altogether? The Crystal Palace ought to be a temple of art (as well as industry) in the largest sense of the word; and these gentlemen are probably not aware of the rank which the art of music now holds in England. For our part, we think that music as an art is not sufficiently represented at the Crystal Palace. The band is large and expensive, but not of the highest quality,—as was shown when it came in competition with the French band of the Guides; and it is, moreover, a wind-band only, by which the orchestral works of the great masters cannot be performed. Its highest effort, therefore, is a favourite overture; and it deals principally with popular operatic arrangements, marches, and dances—music, in short, below the standard of Jullien's Promenade Concerts. The Crystal Palace ought to have a regular orchestra, with the usual complement of string and wind instruments, placed in a position acoustically constructed for its reception, and capable of performing the masterpieces of Mozart, Beethoven, Spohr, and Mendelssohn. We would not, of course, throw aside music of a lighter sort, but would combine the two kinds, as Jullien has done with such remarkable success; and the Crystal Palace would accomplish, in respect to music, its purpose of refining and exalting the artistic taste of the public.—ED.]"

It is not because the music is "*too* attractive" that the managers entertain the idea of getting rid of it, but because it is *not attractive enough*. No idea of "economy" has entered their heads. Of one thing we are convinced, that some of the highest authorities are bent upon having music appropriately represented in the Crystal Palace—by what means it is for themselves to discuss and determine. They may rely upon our counsel and assistance in the matter. Music is as great an art as any of those represented in the Universal Emporium of Art and Science at Sydenham; and there is no reason whatever that it should be brought forward only in such a manner as would befit a mere frivolous, empty relaxation. Depend upon it (and our legislators will find it out before long), music is more than a "tinkling cymbal," and that Bach and Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart, Händel and Mendelssohn, have not spoken to the world merely to "tickle the ears of the groundlings." Their genius was a gift from above, their mission a divine one—to civilise and refine, as well as to delight and astonish their fellow-creatures.

FRENCH PLAYS.—A correspondent of the *Messager des Théâtres et des Arts* says—"Mr. Mitchell is in Paris making arrangements with artists for his theatre in London, which is to open with French plays at Easter. The intention of this skilful manager—whom it is impossible to praise too much—is to produce in succession, at his elegant theatre in St. James's, all the most popular new pieces of the Parisian theatres. He could hardly please his subscribers more than by following out such a plan. But this is not all. It is said that, on her return from Naples, Mlle. Rachel will once more visit London, and will play at Mr. Mitchell's theatre for a month, previous to her departure for America to fulfil her unprecedented engagement with Mr. Barnum."

ST. PAUL, COVENT-GARDEN.—The organist of this church, Mr. Kell, who, through the support of the parishioners, has been three-times elected to the office, notwithstanding the opposition of the parish officials, was last week officially informed that at the nomination of the officers of the church for the ensuing year he would again be opposed. Mr. Kell, although blind, is a gentleman of ability, if his testimonials may be credited. It is therefore hoped that those who supported him on previous elections will again exert themselves in his behalf.

THE GLOBE.—The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Cambridge, visited the Globe in Leicester-square on Tuesday, and was greatly interested in the Model of Sebastopol and the positions of the allied armies.

MADAME ANICHINI gave a *soirée musicale* last week, at the residence of Mrs. Michie Forbes, in Portland-place. The fair *bénéficiaire* was in excellent voice, and, as usual, was received by her aristocratic audience with the highest favour, singing a variety of pieces with eminent ability. Madame Anichini was assisted by Madame F. Lablache, Miss Alleyne, and Signor Ciabatta. Signor Vera and Mr. Benedict presided at the piano-forte. Among the audience were the Rajah of Koorg and the Nabob of Surat, in gorgeous Indian costume, resplendent with diamonds and other stones, too precious to enumerate.

MR. W. VINCENT WALLACE, the composer, is coming to London in the course of next month. He is at present in New York.

ROYAL GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION.—Following up the events of the war, Messrs. Grieve and Telbin have just added to their Diorama two new pictures, the one representing the ever-memorable Battle of Inkermann, and the other the great storm that occurred in the Black Sea on the 14th Nov. Both pictures are executed in the most masterly style. It is scarcely possible to give a more vivid idea of the battle field than is conveyed by the one, and all the horrors of a storm are fearfully depicted in the other. They form an important addition to the Diorama, and have already proved highly attractive. The number of visitors continue to increase, which, considering that the Royal Gallery of Illustration is in its way surpassed by no exhibition in the metropolis, is by no means surprising.

THE FRENCH CHANTEURS MONTAGNARDS, who appeared at Mr. Allcroft's concert at the Lyceum Theatre, a short time since, will officiate on Tuesday next, during service, at Cadogan Chapel, and sing several pieces of sacred music, by French, Italian, and German composers, in aid of the collection to be made on that day for the poor of the parish of Chelsea. It will be remembered that these mountainous singers were heard on one or two occasions at M. Jullien's concerts in Covent Garden. They have, we hear, been recently engaged by Mr. Simpson for his attractive little Marionette Theatre.

THE LATE MR. THOMAS LUCOMBE.—This gentleman, who died at his residence, 27, Tavistock-place, Russell-square, on the 12th inst., in the 69th year of his age, is, from the struggles he made through a long, varied, and useful life, highly deserving a passing notice in a newspaper. Mr. Lucombe had been by turns in the wheel of Fortune, a clothier's clerk, an amateur actor in low comedy, for which (having an irresistibly merry countenance) Nature appeared to have originally designed him, a librarian at Brighton, hotel-keeper there, and, finally, an active and intelligent agent at the distillery of Messrs. Pigeon and Co. In early days Mr. Lucombe exhibited his comic powers at Daley's private theatre, in Berwick-street; at Catherine-street; the Lyceum; Pym's, Gray's Inn-lane; and the Haymarket, for charitable purposes, and, finally, at Brighton, with the same views. Though, as a man and an actor he had found many friends and admirers, he never could adopt the stage as a profession; but nothing cheered him more than to see crowded houses when the appeal was made for worthy objects. Mr. Lucombe has left a widow and two daughters. Both the last-mentioned, at an early period, manifested such indications of musical talent, as induced Mr. Lucombe to spare no pains or expense in its cultivation. Italy was chosen for Miss Lucombe's future school; accompanied by Mrs. Hunt, a vocal professor and attached friend, her studies were for years prosecuted with diligence. The result confirmed Mr. Lucombe's judgment; and his daughters, Mrs. Sims Reeves and Miss Lucombe—the former of whom has risen to the highest rank in her profession—have proved fully worthy of their father's anxious care and solicitude.

MORNING CONCERTS.—About the year 1750, morning concerts were established by Mr. Lacy, one of the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre, but, on account of the performances unseasonably attracting the young merchants and shopkeepers, the time was altered to evening. A Mr. Festing was the leader, and Messrs. Keeble and Butler the organists. Originally oratorio choruses were the chief pieces performed; but the example set by Vauxhall of solo singing, was too attractive not to be followed. Beard, Frasi, and other favourite singers were accordingly engaged, as well as Caporale, the violoncellist, and Miller, a celebrated bassoon player.

DRURY LANE.

THE lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, in the production of Meyerbeer's *L'Étoile du Nord*, has at last brought out a piece which has challenged criticism. Since the first night of the pantomime, new plays, comedies, melodramas, and farces, by known and unknown hands, have been presented to the public; but none of the papers noticed them. In fact, they enjoyed no previous announcement, and the manager seemed to rely but little on their success. A very different course of proceeding was followed with regard to *L'Étoile du Nord*. For weeks before hand it was advertised in all the metropolitan journals, and a pledge was given that the production should be worthy of the opera—a pledge, the full force of which does not appear to have been thoroughly understood. Mr. Smith, like others before him, looked upon the scenery and decorations as the first consideration, regarding the music as a mere adjunct or auxiliary. With this view, he went to work eagerly and zealously; had dresses made and scenes painted, regardless of expense: provided three military bands (there were only two *visible* on Monday night), and a *mise-en-scène* of great splendour and completeness. This was his view, which we must view in its proper light. His next step was to get leave to perform the music. How he did this has not been explained—if, indeed, he did it at all. The manager of Drury Lane Theatre seems too "wide awake" to run his head into a legal noose in the teeth of international copyright law; we are, therefore, inclined to believe that he has taken something else besides "French leave," in the production of *L'Étoile du Nord* at Drury Lane. Mr. Smith did not regard the music in Meyerbeer's opera as superfluous. He engaged Mr. Tully, an experienced hand, to conduct the performance; gave him a *carte blanche*—with due limitations—to select a band and chorus (regardless of expense); and held a council as to the principal vocalists. Mr. Tully at once sifted the orchestral force, and more than doubled its numerical strength. He engaged several first-rate artists for some of the departments, and altogether made up an imposing array of instrumentalists which, with more strings, might have been an efficient band. Mr. Tully would have still further improved his cohort, but that M. Jullien had taken with him into the provinces so many of the principal executants who would have been available. The chorus was selected with care; but, unfortunately, they were taken from many different sources, and required more rehearsals to ensure a good *ensemble*. These rehearsals they did not get, and Meyerbeer's complex and elaborate music suffered in consequence. The principal singers was the great rock a-head; and here both Mr. Smith and Mr. Tully were for a long time non-plussed. The main difficulty was the *Prima donna*. At last Mdlle. Jenny Baur presented herself—a German, accounted to have a "foreign reputation." Furthermore, she had sung at the *Réunion des Arts*. Moreover, she spoke English like a native. These were all "considerations moving towards an issue," and the result was, that Mdlle. Jenny Baur was engaged to play Catherine, the heroine. Mr. Henri Drayton was recommended to both manager and conductor, for the character of Peter the Great, by the boldness and vigour of his style, and his manly deportment; and a second lady, for Prascovia, was supplied in the person of Mrs. Henri Drayton, his *cara sposa*. But the great difficulty was to procure four tenors, which the cast imperatively demands. Now tenors are not scarce in London; but as tenors in the metropolis would perhaps want all to play "primos," the proper persons were not to be found. At last, by looking up the theatres and concert-rooms of Manchester and Liverpool, two tenors were produced, rejoicing in the names of Bowler and Beal; and Mr. Miranda, a very promising pupil of Mr. Howard Glover, was obtained at home; and Mr. Thomas Williams, an artist not altogether unknown in the London concert rooms (brother of the *once Misses Williams*!) These, however, were hardly the artists to do justice to Meyerbeer's masterpiece. To conclude, the two *vivandières*, who sing the charming duo-couplets in the tent scene of the second act, were unknown altogether to fame and quite incompetent, as it turned out.

So much for generalities. With many, who listened without attention, and who had not heard the opera in Paris, the perform-

ance of Monday night might have passed muster. The numbers and power of the band, the occasional spirit of the chorus, the admirably arranged *mise-en-scène*, and the splendour, variety, and picturesqueness of the costumes, must have gone far to blind the eyes of the multitude to the musical imperfections. For our own part—and we say it with regret—the representation of *L'Étoile du Nord* was an insult to the greatest living and working dramatic composer. The operas of Meyerbeer, as every body knows, are more intricate and difficult than those of any one else; but, as every body does not know, *L'Étoile du Nord* is more intricate and difficult than any other opera of Meyerbeer. Mr. Smith, having no musical knowledge, and being probably his own chief counsellor, was not aware of the enormous difficulties presented in the score. So little thought, indeed, did he bestow upon the music, that he considered three full-band rehearsals sufficient to insure a correct and effective performance. Had the rehearsals been three-and-twenty, instead of three, we have no doubt there would have been less to find fault with; still, we have no hesitation in saying, that, with the present orchestral and choral force of Drury Lane, and with the present leading vocalists, an efficient execution of *L'Étoile du Nord* was not to be expected, under any circumstances.

Mr. Henri Drayton, among the artists, was entitled to most praise. His voice is not superior in quality, nor are his accomplishments as an actor of the highest order; but the artistic germ is within him, and he displays great feeling and purpose. Mr. Henri Drayton, on one or two occasions, produced a decided impression on the audience. Had all the singers done so much, our praise of the general performance would not have been so stinted. Mdlle. Jenny Baur has a strong ringing *soprano* voice, more powerful than sweet, and of great compass. She occasionally gave effect to the music; but either nervousness, or not having studied her part with sufficient care, rendered her performance unsatisfactory. Mdlle. Jenny Baur is good-looking, and exhibits ease and even grace on the stage. Mrs. Henri Drayton did her utmost with the music of the second lady, Prascovia, which is very arduous, and not suited to her voice. Of the other principals we have nothing to say.

Mr. Miranda obtained the only encore of the evening (except the overture) in the war-song of Ismailoff, the Tartar. The song is highly dramatic, and was rendered with a point and energy that promise well for the young tenor. Mr. Miranda's voice is of charming quality, and his singing shows that his training has been entrusted to proper hands.

The plot has been already described at length in Vol. 32, Number 9, to which we refer our readers. Of the music we shall defer entering into any particulars until a more favourable opportunity presents itself. The performance of Monday night, it is but justice to say, was received by a crowded house with every indication of success. The overture was enthusiastically encored—mainly, however, owing to the extraordinary circumstance of placing the brass-band, which the composer stations behind the stage-curtain, in a front box, defended by a gauze screen. Mr. Henri Drayton and Mdlle. Baur were recalled at the end of each act, (Mr. Drayton twice after the second), and Mr. Smith was forced to appear in obedience to a vociferous summons at the end of the great camp scene, which presented a really magnificent *tableau*.

L'Étoile du Nord has been repeated every night during the week.

MUSIC OF THE TARTARS.—The songs of the Tartar, generally in blank verse, are very poetical, highly expressive, and are sung to suitable melodies. Their instrumental music is mostly martial. The Tartars have an instrument peculiar to themselves, which they denominate a *koba*. It is a kind of violin, open at the top, in shape somewhat resembling a boat, it has two hair strings which are swept by a bow, and the notes stopped as in a violin.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.—The third of the series of the so-called Winter Concerts went off with *éclat*. The first part consisted of Mendelssohn's overture to *Schöne Melusine*, a concerto for the clarinet by Mozart, and one of Haydn's symphonies in E flat, known by the addition "mit dem Paukenschlag."

DRAMATIC.

HAYMARKET.—On Monday evening a new company of the Spanish dancers, with Senora, Perea Nena again the *première danseuse*, appeared at this theatre in two novel *divertissements*. The success of the Spanish dancers has been almost unprecedented. The main part of the attraction is, of course, to be laid to the Senora Perea Nena, who, in her way, is incomparable, and appears to have taken the audiences of the Haymarket "by storm." The theatre is crowded nightly; the attention marked, and the applause incessant when Senora Perea dances; while nobody seems to think of leaving until the last fall of the green curtain shuts out the last twinkle of her very small and volatile feet. There is, indeed, something singularly alluring in the Spanish national figures, when danced to such perfection, and with so much artlessness and grace, as by Perea Nena. It is strange that the Spanish and French dances—to speak in astronomical phrase—should be "inversely" as the temperaments of the national character. The Spanish character is grave and solemn; the Spanish dance is light, quick, and bustling. The French character is hilarious and volatile; the national dances (except the galop), slow, calm, and measured. We leave to more learned casuists and wiser philosophers than ourselves to discover the cause. The Spanish dancers appear every night with undiminished effect. The new company is a decided improvement on the first; but Senora Perea Nena is, as before, the centre of all attraction—the cynosure of all eyes. An extraordinary hit has been made by a kind of grotesque *pas de deux* of two Gallician peasants, who, at first shy, are encouraged by the other rustics to approach each other, until their bashfulness melts away, they court closely (*s'écharquent de près*), and dance out their passion in a delirium of the wildest ecstasy. This *pas de deux*, as humourous, piquant, and natural as it is thoroughly original, is mimed and "footed" to admiration by Senora Perea Nena and her companion—Senor Marco Diaz (we believe), who has a capital physiognomy and "great expression of eye." The audience became almost as enthusiastic as the dancers, and the *pas* is encored, with acclamations, every night. Upon this display of admirable skill the curtain falls. We congratulate Mr. Buckstone on his renewed success—which, we trust, may benefit his treasury as it did before.

DRAMATIC GOSSIP.—Her Majesty and Prince Albert attended the performance at the Haymarket on Tuesday evening.—The Lyceum theatre is announced to be let from Easter to Michaelmas.—Mr. Thackeray's two act comedy, to the production of which all the literary as well as the dramatic world of London were looking forward with so much interest, has been withdrawn from the Olympic. There was an excellent part for Mr. Robson in it (we are informed), which makes the withdrawal the more to be regretted. The reason of this unexpected *dénouement* is only known to Mr. Wigan, the manager, and the celebrated novelist himself.

PROVINCIAL.

CHELTENHAM.—Mdme. Montignani's concert at the Assembly Rooms on Tuesday evening was attended by a full and fashionable audience. The vocalists were Signor and Mdme. F. Lablache, and Miss Stabbach, and the instrumentalists, Mad. Montignani and Mr. Blagrove. Mad. Montignani, a charming and talented *virtuoso*, played her pianoforte pieces with excellent effect. Mr. Blagrove performed two solos on the concertina, and Miss Stabbach, who made her first appearance at Cheltenham, created a favourable impression, especially in the ballad of "Kathleen Mavourneen."

EDINBURGH.—A Grand Funeral Masonic lodge was held in Queen Street Hall, on Saturday evening, in memory of Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, Past Grand Master Mason of Scotland. G. J. Whyte Melville, Esq., of Melville (in the absence of the Duke of Atholl, Grand Master Mason of Scotland,) presided. Lord Loughborough and Dr. M'Cowan officiated as the senior and junior Grand Wardens. There were upwards of 300 brethren present, comprising Major Nasmyth, the hero of Silistria, Brothers Wm. Hunt of Pittencraff, J. F. Oswald of Dunnikier, Samuel Somerville, Adolphus Robinow (the two

latter representing Foreign Grand Lodges), Rev. Dr. Arnot, Grand Chaplain, J. L. Woodman, Grand Clerk, &c. &c.; with deputations from most of the sister lodges in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and adjacent towns. Dr. Arnot, Grand Chaplain, pronounced an *éloge* on the deceased nobleman. Brother J. C. Kieser presided at the organ, and airs from Händel, Mozart, etc., were sung by Brothers Herren Formes, Reichardt, Hubert Formes, Signor Gregorio, etc., by permission of Brother Wood, who gave their gratuitous services—the proceeds being devoted to the Scottish Masonic Benevolent Fund. The "Dead March" in *Saul* and a Hymn by Haydn were performed by an instrumental band under the leadership of Brother A. Mackenzie. This is the only ceremony of the kind which has been celebrated by the Grand Lodge of Scotland since the death of the Duke of Sussex in 1843.—*Edinburgh Courant*, Feb. 27th.

HULL.—The concerts given by the Hull Vocal Society, who, with the exception of their conductor, Mr. Skelton, are all amateurs, have become highly popular. The number of members is limited to 200, and there are always some 40 applications on the books. The finest glees and madrigals (sung without accompaniment), and in full choir, interspersed with choruses, four-part songs, and solo glees, etc., and the care taken at rehearsals, combined with the fine voices of the singers, is the secret of their popularity. At the last concert, Cooke's five-voiced glee, for solo and chorus, "Shades of the heroes," and "Hohenlinden," were all well sung. Bishop's chorus, "On our king's natal day," was also given with spirit, and the solos were effective. A testimonial has been presented to Mr. Skelton, in the shape of a handsome timepiece, consisting of a clock under a glass shade, standing upon a fluted column, on the basement of which is the following inscription:—"Presented to G. J. Skelton, Esq., by the superintendents and teachers of the various Sunday-schools in Hull, as a memorial of their gratitude for his valuable and disinterested services as conductor of the united choir of 12,000 children, on the occasion of her Majesty's visit to Hull, October 14, 1854." This is, we understand, the result of a voluntary subscription on the part of the different schools, in small sums, and in no case exceeding half-a-crown.

The Vocal Society's Patriotic Fund Concert took place in the Music-hall, Jarratt-street. A military trophy was erected in front of the organ. Cannons, guns, bayonets, swords, drums, and other warlike articles, were variously disposed; from the centre rose a pillar, with the words "Alma," "Balaklava," "Inkermann," upon it, and surmounted by a bust of Her Majesty the Queen; whilst the national flags of the allied powers, with evergreen wreaths, and topped by a crescent, formed the back. On either side fires were raised upon pillars surrounded with arms. A line of soldiers, extending from the trophy to the front of the orchestra, with some Royal Navy sailors amongst them, were placed at each side, behind the singers. The programme presented a good selection of appropriate pieces, which were executed in a creditable manner. Mr. G. J. Skelton officiated as conductor. The concert was repeated on the Monday evening following.

The Hull Subscription Musical Society gave its first public performance in the same hall. There was a good programme of vocal and instrumental music. Mr. H. Deval, R.A. Music, officiated as conductor, and Mr. J. B. Acey as leader. The principal vocalists were Miss H. Newman, Mr. J. E. Perring, and Mr. J. Morrow, all of whom were repeatedly encored, as were also Mr. W. W. Wilson in a solo, and Mr. W. Peach in a ballad. The choruses were effective, and the concert passed off in a satisfactory manner.

GRAVESEND.—An Evening Concert took place on Wednesday the 14th ult., at the Assembly Rooms. The Distin Family, Miss McAlpine, Miss Margaret McAlpine, Miss M. Wells, Mr. Theodore Distin, and Mr. Montem Smith, were the artists. The concert gave satisfaction to the audience, which was numerous, and included the Mayor and some of the best families of the neighbourhood. There were no less than six encores:—viz., Miss Juliana McAlpine, in "The Queen's Letter," and in a Scotch duet with her sister—Miss M. Wells, in a Scotch ballad, "Bonnie Dundee," and, in conjunction with Messrs. Distin, in an old glee, by Ford—Miss Margaret McAlpine in the 'Brindisi,'

from *Lucrezia Borgia*, and Mr. Theodore Distin, in a *scena* from the *Sonnambula*. The Messrs. Distin pleased very much by their performances on the Sax-horns; and the concert ended with "God save the Queen," in which all the artists joined.

MANCHESTER.—The usual monthly meeting of the Ardwick Gentlemen's Glee Club was held on the evening of Wednesday, the 21st ult., at the Club-room of the George and Dragon Inn, Ardwick-green.—Madame de Szczepanowska's first Subscription Concert was given at the Town Hall, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, on Monday evening last. The lady, who is a well-known pianist in Manchester and its vicinity, was supported by M. de Szczepanowska, the violoncellist, Mr. Seymour, the violinist, and Miss Armstrong and Mrs. Brooke as vocalists.

LIVERPOOL.—Mr. Thomas has instituted a series of Saturday Morning Concerts in the Philharmonic Hall, to commence at two o'clock, and to which the price of admission is but a shilling. These entertainments much resemble the "Evening Shilling Concerts" so popular in the same hall; and Saturday's concert (the first), in spite of the weather, attracted a numerous audience. We had two overtures, Boieldieu's *La Dame Blanche*, and *La Sirène*; a waltz by Lanner; an *andante* from one of Spohr's double quartetts; a galop by Tolbecque; a polka by Montague; and a set of quadrilles, by La Motte. There were also three instrumental solo performances, by Mr. E. W. Thomas, violin; Mr. Sorge, clarinet; and Mr. Streather, all very good, the latter being encored, an honour which the other two artists would have received but for the length of their compositions. The vocalist was Mrs. Streather, who sang an English ballad, by Benedict, and "Robert, toi que j'aime."

M. Jullien gives a "Mozart Night" at the Philharmonic Hall on Monday, when Madame Pleyel, Herr Ernst, and Miss Dolby will appear, in addition to the usual attractions offered by the great *maestro*.

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF MUSIC BEFORE MOZART.

(Continued from page 116.)

In art only those theories are useful which spring out of practice; this everybody knows, and for this reason the good works of this kind always appear in epochs, when the art, whose principles they expound, has just completed a whole cycle in the epochs of maturity or even of decay. Musical Art alone had the remarkable misfortune that the theorists arose before the composers, and that music was taught before it was at all understood. The consequence was inevitable. From Hucbald to Palestrina, and from Palestrina to Mozart, there was no advance, no improvement, no conquest of science and of genius—in a word, no truth, which theory had not unconditionally condemned, and which criticism had not made it a duty to itself to combat. Prescriptions, founded on the knowledge of the little that there was, but not on the presentiment of that which might or should be, were reduced to general rules, which were either entirely false, or only right in a very few cases. When a man of genius ventured to break through this confining codex, they fell upon him on all sides; but when the innovation became general, through the ear and custom, and passed into a rule, then theory, sighing, pushed her Hercules' pillars somewhat farther back, until she was driven from them likewise by a new discovery. In this way the theorists, the men of resistance, saw themselves continually disturbed in their majestic repose, behind which they would fain have entrenched themselves, by the composers, the men of progress; and the constitutions, which they had thought to impose in *secula seculorum*, upon music, gradually tumbling down, because they were built upon the perishable foundations of *a priori* doctrines and dogmatical empiricisms. Justice constrains me to admit, that theory paid composition back with interest for all the evil which the latter had inflicted on her. Long were her chains worn without an attempt to shake them off; and if at last some ring was broken, she was instantly at hand to repair the damage, and out of her very disaster forge the material for a new yoke; so that, although continually overtaken and subdued, she always understood the way to hold back and to paralyze the movement that was bearing her along.

So was it, and so will it be till musical art is made complete in all its elements. Only after perfect master-works can there be rational theories. At this day—now that music is definitively established in all its parts—the last and greatest reform finds no longer any adversaries; and for half-a-century there has been nothing new to discover in respect to chords and modulations. We may now at last expect a good and more logical grammar than exists in any living language, and which the author will do better to write in twenty pages than in fifty volumes, if he would leave nothing out. In the meanwhile, examples, which the ear calls good, have become so multiplied, and rules have been so far stretched, that every conceivable boldness in composition is justified, in one way or another, by our still very vague principles of harmony. One might now sound the seven notes of the scale, nay, all the notes in an accord at once, without violating the rules. There is no longer anything absolute; and while the old theorists submitted to innumerable general observances and general prohibitions, the theorists of our time would sink under the burthen of exceptions, if they had to look out for them and mind them all. Mozart has hurled Theory from her throne. He said, "I am Theory!" and he took her place, and she took his. The theorists now seek the solution of difficult or doubtful problems* in the examples of the great masters, since a strictly scientific, or rational system of harmony is wanting. This, perhaps, will one day be discovered, and seems not undiscoverable in an art, which, in its basis and its elements, borders so closely on the abstract sciences. Till then, the musician's ear must remain the highest, though a far from perfect, law, by which to decide what is to be rejected, and what admitted into composition.

We reckon about four centuries from Hucbald to the earliest known contrapuntal work, for the discovery and elegant publication of which, for the first time, the learned world is indebted to Messrs. Fétis, Kalkbrenner, and Kieseweller. These four centuries were the scholastic or dogmatic period of art, in which theory was all, and practice (for this very reason) nothing, or less than nothing. Men wished to speak the speech of music; they wished to write it, and yet its words were not yet found; they wished to make grammars, and yet all the elements of the language were wanting. The most famous scholars asked antiquity; and antiquity, so wonderful in its works of architecture and sculpture, in its prose and poetry—antiquity, in which lay the elements for the revival of philosophy, literature and painting, became for music the source of the greatest barbarism. Men without names ventured on the path of experiment, and discovered much that was true and useful. They had to bring the old rubbish into harmony with nature, the inextricable points of archaeology with universal feeling, the ear with Boethius, the classical doctrines of the organum with the romantic doctrine of the third and sixth. Many men in the middle ages exhausted themselves in attempts to bring about this unnatural union, which was finally realized in the course of the fourteenth century in the following manner. I give here a fragment of a *Gloria*, taken from a mass, which Master Machault composed in the year of grace 1364, for the anointing and coronation of Charles V., King of France.



* Witness Godfrey Weber's "Treatise on the Theory of Musical Composition."



Master Guillaume Machault, poet and musician, was a perfect eclectic, an artist impartial and complaisant towards every one, as one may see from this example, in which the old organum of Hucbald in octaves, fifths, and fourths, reaches the hand of brotherhood to the improvements which John de Muris had taught in the composer's country thirty years before Machault had derived due profit therefrom! The example is worthy of remark, because it proves that the musicians of that time, although they wrote in four parts, yet possessed no correct knowledge of harmony. I mean harmony by means of chords. They scarcely had a pre-sentiment of that. We here discern indeed some trichords, but only as a necessary consequence of putting together two intervals; only as a fruitless accident, and not as a fundamental law. Notes were brought together in consonances and dissonances, without making either to depend on the harmonic totality to which they should all contribute.

(To be continued.)

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—A soirée was given on Saturday evening, in aid of the funds of the Warehousemen and Clerks' Schools for orphan and indigent children. The hall was very well attended, and the galleries were ornamented with the banners of France and England. The audience was addressed during the evening by Mr. Cruikshank, Dr. Archer, and Father Gavazzi, whose views with regard to the excellent tendencies of the charity, when combined with religious education, were identical. Mr. Cruikshank was very active as the president of the evening, and during the musical portion of the entertainment officiated as "Master of the Ceremonies," introducing the artists by name to the audience, as he led them to the orchestra. The vocalists were Madame Weiss, the Misses Ransford, Eyles, Palmer, and Poole; Messrs. Weiss, Rogers, Ransford, Donald King, and Lawler. Mr. G. Lake accompanied the vocal music; and Miss Coles played two fantasias on the pianoforte. Among the pieces encored, were Shield's "Thorn," by Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Weiss's ballad of the "Village Blacksmith," sung in energetic style by the composer. The Crystal Palace Band, under the direction of M. Schallehn, played selections of operatic music at intervals, and the evening's amusement gave evident pleasure to all who were present. It is satisfactory to have heard from Mr. Cruikshank, that although the institution has only been about fifteen months before the public, a sum of £10,000 has been subscribed, £8,000 of which has already been received.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

MR. NEATE begs to announce that he intends, in the course of next month, to publish an *Essay on Pianoforte Fingering*, chiefly as connected with expression. Price 10s. to subscribers (whose names must be addressed to the author, No. 2, Chapel-street, Portland Place), and 15s. to non-subscribers.

MISS BLANCHE CAPILL (Pupil of Louis Leo—Voice, Mezzo-Soprano), Professor of Music and Singing, 47, Alfred-street, River-terrace, Islington, where letters respecting pupils or engagements may be addressed.

MR. ALFRED MELLON respectfully announces that a series of Grand Orchestral Union Concerts under his direction will take place during the season at St. Martin's-hall. The first on Monday evening, April 2nd, 1855. Subscribers' names received by Messrs. Cramer and Beale, 201, Regent-street.

ASSISTANT WANTED in an old established Music Warehouse in the West of England.—A young man, accustomed to the music business, well acquainted with the London Catalogue, and competent to the necessary book-keeping.—Address, with reference, to A. B., care of Messrs. Addison and Co., Regent-street.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.—The words by LONGFELLOW. The music composed and sung by W. H. WEISS. Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co., 201, Regent-street; and Messrs. Addison and Hollier, 210, Regent-street.

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MR. WM. STERNDALE BENNETT respectfully announces that his ANNUAL SERIES OF PERFORMANCES OF CLASSICAL PIANOFORTE MUSIC will take place at the Hanover-square Rooms, on Tuesday evenings, March 13, April 3, and May 1. Subscription, one guinea. Applications to Messrs. Leader and Cock, 63, New Bond-street.

BEETHOVEN'S ADIEU.—One of the last and most beautiful compositions of this great composer, for piano 2s. As a song, the words by Sir Francis Knowles, price 2s. 6d.—Boosey and Sons, 28, Holles-street.

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STARS OF THE WEST WALTZES, composed by G. MONTAGNE, and dedicated to the Queen. Illustrated by BRANDARD. The best and most popular set of the day. Price, for piano, 4s.; Septett, 3s. 6d.; Full Band, 5s.—Boosey and Sons, 28, Holles street.

LES ETOILES FILANTES, Caprice pour le Piano, composed by A. QUIDANT, price 3s.—"Les Etoiles Filantes is an idea on the piano of the sensation one feels when gazing on a beautiful starlit sky, and ends with a very clever imitation of meteors or shooting stars. This caprice is highly poetical, and the conclusion is very novel and effective."—*Critic*.—Boosey and Sons, 28, Holles-street.

MADILLE CLARA SCHUMANN (née Wieck), Pianiste, begs to announce that she will arrive in London on the 12th of April next, for a short period only. All applications to Messrs. Leader and Cock, 63, New Bond-street.

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THE MUSICAL DIRECTORY FOR 1855.

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5. Names of Professors, Music-sellers, and Musical Instrument Manufacturers, throughout the Kingdom, with their Addresses, &c.

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M. C. SALAMAN'S Two Lectures at the Hanover-square Rooms, on Thursday and Tuesday evenings, March the 15th and 27th. Mr. Salaman will perform some highly interesting compositions on the Ancient Virginals; Spinett; Handel's, and other Harpsichords. For both Lectures, 5s. and 4s. At Addison and Co.'s, 210, Regent-street, and 36, Baker-street.

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EXETER HALL.—Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, His Royal Highness Prince Albert, and the rest of the Royal Family, have been pleased to grant their especial patronage to the SECOND GRAND PERFORMANCE by the NEW PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY, on Wednesday, March 28, in aid of the funds of St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, when will be performed, among other works, Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, Mendelssohn's Concerto in A, Weber's Overture *Oboron*, and Ruler of the Spirits, Mozart's Overture *Zauberflöte*, Mendelssohn's Part Song with chorus of 300 voices. Conductor—Dr. Wyde. Stall tickets, one guinea; reserved seats, west gallery, 10s. 6d.; may be had at Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co.'s; Messrs. Keith, Prowse, and Co.'s; and at St. Mary's Hospital. Subscription to the Society, £2 2s.; west gallery £1 1s.

EXETER HALL.—MR. GEORGE CASE begs respectfully to announce that his ANNUAL CONCERT will take place at the above hall on Wednesday Evening, April 11. Engagements are pending with all the most distinguished vocal and instrumental performers. Further particulars will be duly announced.—28, Holles-street, Cavendish-square.

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FRANK MORI; Leader, Mr. THIRLWALL. Including Messrs. Barret, Lazarus Baumann, Remusat, Lovell Phillips, Prosperi, Mount, Mann, Cioffi, Zeiss, Tolbecque Nadia, Chipp, &c. For terms apply to Mr. A. Guest, 1, Kingston Russell-place Oakley-square, Camden-town, or Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Co., 201, Regent-street

GRAND AMATEUR SOIRÉE MUSICALE.

An Amateur Soirée Musicale will take place on Tuesday, the 20th March, at the Hanover-square Rooms, for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded at Scutari. The proceeds to be presented to Miss Nightingale. Tickets, 6s. each, or a family ticket to admit five, One Guinea. All letters and applications for tickets to be addressed to Miss Bevington, 48, Greek-street, Soho-square.

SIR HENRY BISHOP.—GLEES and CONCERTED

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